

THE TALKING MACHINE REVIEW



NO. 9

April

1971

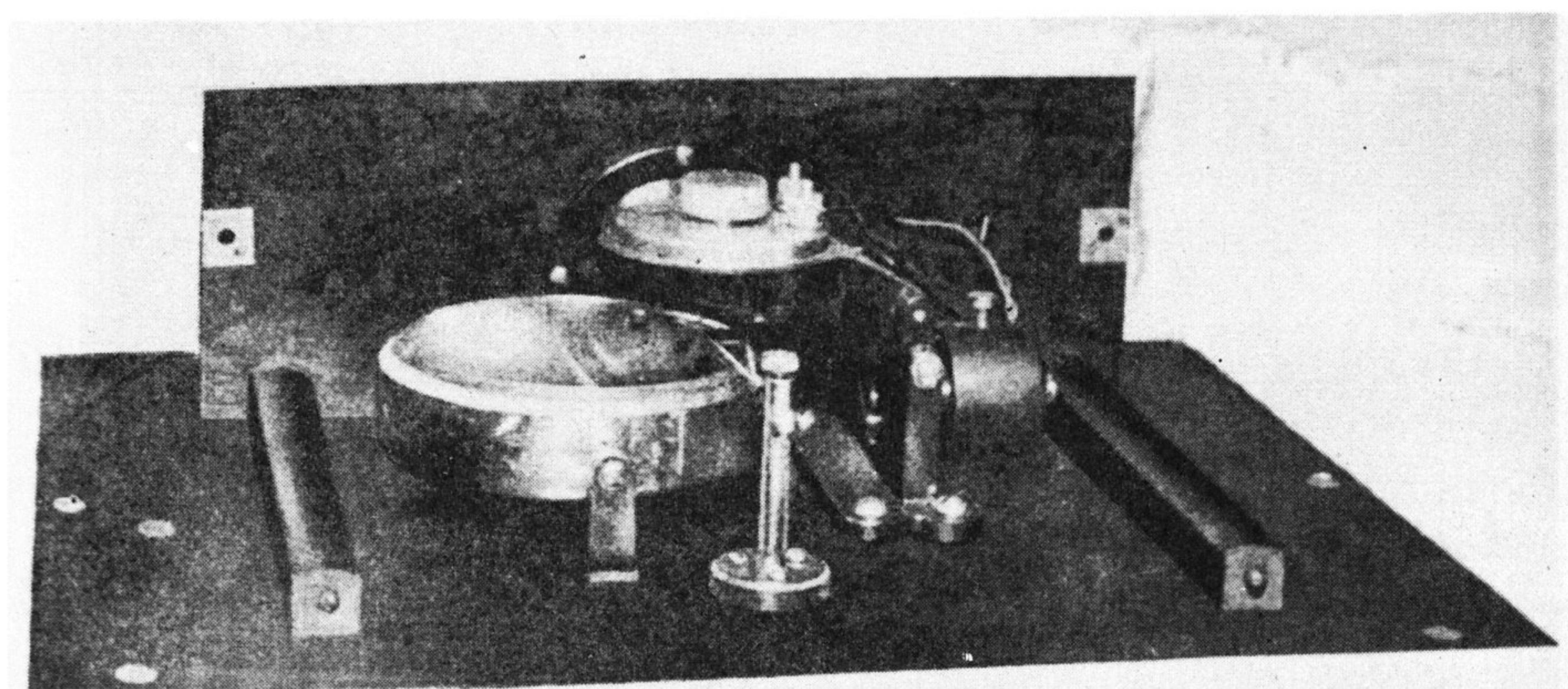


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As I type this note on 2nd March, during the postal strike, I have 1088 items ready to be posted, which includes the February issue of the Talking Machine Review. No matter when the normal postal service is resumed, there will inevitably be chaos for some considerable time ahead, especially with overseas mails. Thus I crave the patience of all readers. Our letters will "cross" in the post. Perhaps a letter written later will overtake one written earlier ... and so on ... The February magazine, with 'reminders' enclosed, was prepared to be sent very early in that month and has been sitting in the envelopes, all stamped, in congesting heaps in my bedroom since then!!! If your subscription is due, kindly renew promptly to help us over this very difficult situation.

I know that quite a number of our readers are also interested in very early radio so I am sure that they will enjoy reading Mike Field's article. We welcome Terry Bennett to our pages for we know, too, that there are many piano enthusiasts among you who will be interested by his article on Cortot.

Ernie Bayly.

* * * * *
ALFRED CORTOT by Terry Bennett

French pianism has produced some distinguished figures - Pugno, Marguerite Long, Robert Lortat among others - but none quite achieved the extraordinary international impact of the great Alfred Cortot. This was due in some measure to Cortot's unique versatility in the musical melieu. To be a truly gifted pianist was never enough for him. His passion for music drove him into the conducting field, he participated actively in chamber music with Jacques Thibaud and Casals, he wrote extensively, taught, lectured, and edited a vast amount of music with an energy unparalleled in the artistic circles of his time. As a pianist, he represented for many the very soul of the instrument. He possessed a divinely poetic sensitivity that seemed to illuminate the texture of the music from within. This instant gift of spiritual projection enabled him to characterise, in his own inimitable way, the gamut of the whole romantic literature.

Born of French parents at Nyons in 1877, Cortot travelled to Paris at an early age and there took piano lessons from his sisters. A little while later found him at the Conservatoire where he studied under Decombres and Diemer. The youngster distinguished himself by winning many prizes and his first foray into the European musical whirl was as a conductor. At Bayreuth he became assistant to Mottl and Richter. One of his duties as an enthusiastic young Wagnerite on returning to Paris was to give the first performance there of Gotterdamerung. Accompanying and solo work, plus several assorted academic activities occupied his time for the next few years.

Cortot's long and varied recording career (commencing in 1903 accompanying Felia Litvinne) was pursued with great industry. It is difficult to know which records to select for discussion, so many of them are among the eternal glories of the gramophone - at least as far as instrumentalists are concerned - but the period of greatest interest and achievement, I feel, was around the early and mid 30's.

However, to touch very briefly upon the earlier material. An artist of undoubted quality is revealed in such discs as the Rigoletto Paraphrase (DB 168) and the Scribian 'Pathetic' Study (Victor 982), electrifying performances both, in spite of the primitive sound, but finger inaccuracies are evident even on the early discs - a prime example being Chopin's Aeolian Harp Study (DA 691) - and so inevitably led to talk of Cortot's supposed limitations as a virtuoso. Indeed, it is probably true that he was more accident-prone than almost any great pianist in history, but such was the strength of his imaginative conceptions that the blemishes mattered not at all. In fact, I've always thought Cortot's wrong notes tended to intensify music's message, so seemingly eloquent are they.

6 As the years passed, Cortot recorded an enormous amount of Chopin and he was without doubt one of the greatest Chopin players of all time. It seems odd, though that he never recorded (I stand to be corrected on this) a Mazurka, one wonders why he apparently avoided giving his attention to these masterpieces in the recording studio. They would surely have had a good deal to say in his hands.

Much has been made of the so-called 'French' quality of tone, a concentration on lightness rather than strength and a preference for fast tempi. This would certainly apply to Cortot who hadn't a beautiful tone as such, it wasn't warm or profound and some of his tempi were definitely on the quick side. But this and his lack of real muscular strength (Cortot could produce a big tone when he liked, but it was a slender tone, not the thunderous sonority of say, Petri, Rosenthal or even Horowitz) were balanced out to a nicety by his customary elegance and intimacy which seemed to suit immaculately the music he chose to perform.

Let us look at a few of his Chopin recordings.

The four Ballades (DB 2023/26) are notable for a finely judged division between grace and drama and the wonderful spontaneity that the pianist invested them with still sounds fresh and invigorating today. A superior set this, to Cortot's earlier one of the Ballades (DB 1343/6). That personalised rubato was the key to his greatness in Chopin, it was measured, yet unpredictable. Cortot had a great architectural appreciation too, and the curve and shape of his phrases was a model of taste and refinement. The B Minor Sonata (DA 1333-6) is a good example. What spaciousness there is in this performance. Cortot could spin a wealth of magical harmonies out of the air almost, it seemed, as in the F Minor Study of Op. 25. No pianist had this remarkable ability to play so quickly, and delicately, thus dispensing the vulgarity. His 'Butterfly' Study dances with fairy lightness, the A Minor ripples, the 'Black Key' Study scintillates and melts the heart. Who today can animate and play upon a treasure-house of all that delights the senses to such a degree?

The A Flat Polonaise (DB 2014) is a heroic performance and a very individual one, again exhibiting a 'French' tonal quality, slender and indicative of a soprano-like timbre, a very different sound in this Polonaise to the rich sonority of the exuberant Friedman approach (Columbia L 1990).

Perhaps the Cortot performance that most people hold closest to their hearts is the incomparable and deeply loved one of the 14 Waltzes (DB 2311-6) showing Cortot at his most persuasive in instinctive appreciation of nuance, shape of line and gesture, and point and logic. Each piece in his hands explores a whole world of kaleidoscopic fancy. It is this penetration, this willing acknowledgement to subjugate the virtuoso's bearing to a message of mournful charm, seeking the honesty of musical truth at birth that for me makes Cortot and Chopin inseparable. These are personal readings and I would not willingly exchange his treasurable explorations for any note perfect performance. They make the least concession to objectivity and in their glory, criticism has to fall silent. Of course, Cortot uses a big rubato, but it is superbly fashioned to reveal harmonic washes of colour and exquisitely tailored to the most profound expressive connotations of the music. The C Sharp Minor is a hypnotic performance, deceptively cloying almost. It's underlying strength of frame and deeply committed heart is not of the interpreter of to-day's world.

I find Cortot excitingly impulsive in the larger Waltzes. In op 34 No. 1 and op. 42, he clearly gets carried away, putting his heart before his fingers - and oh! for a pianist to make such a 'Lapse' these days! With a breathless magic is op. 70 No. 3 recreated and for all Cortot reveals of its gossamer content it lives again in a rubato born of pure sensitivity and loveliness. I do not think anyone will ever equal Cortot in the Waltzes: who could hope to aspire to such a tasteful and delightful envisagement? I have happily returned to the set again and again over the years.

Among fine Liszt performances are the second Rhapsody (DB 1042) the 11th (DA 952) and the Legend No. 2 (DB 3269). No flashiness or profanity here, instead, intellectuality balanced by soaring romantic abandon. His Schumann was, to my mind, without peer in his time, and he recorded a fair amount. 'Scenes of Childhood' has nostalgic sensibility (DB 2581-2), 'Kreisleriana' has aristocracy (DB 2608/11) and Papillons (DA 1442-3) an infusion of spring like gaiety and light hearted fun and friendliness, fully befitting the title of 'Butterflies'.

One must not overlook his chamber music issues, his concertos, nor his role as conductor of the Ecole Normale Chamber Orchestra. Perfect rapport with Thibaud and Casals in the little Haydn G. Major Trio (DA 895-6) and sympathetic partnering of Thibaud in the Franck A Major Sonata (DB 1347-50) - a lovely piece of music, this.

Discipline and keenness of line are to be found in Cortot's direction of Bach's Brandenburg No. 4 with the Ecole Normale, plus Bouillon, Morseau and Cortet.

Finally, one must mention Cortot's authority in French music which manifested itself in concert and recording, writing and teaching. He wrote a brilliant essay on French piano music and his recordings of Debussy and Ravel are as much a product of the Cortot legend as the devoted romantic. A valuable gesture was H.M.V.'s release on DB 1649-53 of Chausson's Concerto in D. Major, still a comparatively unfamiliar work. Then there was Faure, Saint-Saens, Franck and of course, Debussy and Ravel.

In Debussy's first book of Preludes, (DA 1240/44 and DB 1593) and Children's Corner (DB 1248/49), Cortot shows himself (rather surprisingly at first hearing) a strong and energetic Debussy player. He is much more concerned with structure, than say Gieseking, who adopts a myriad-hued mixture of sound patterns. And yet, despite the initial impression of uncommittedness, Cortot's approach has lasted. His 'Gollywog' in Children's Corner is full of gusto and one wonders if Cortot's poetic sense is enough to adequately suggest the finer-grained subtlety inherent in the harmony. There is a poignant loneliness in 'The Snow is Dancing', and 'Serenade for the Doll' sounds almost like a study as it coruscates with a Ravelian sharpness of profile.

Such was the extent of Cortot's sympathies. Beauty and a sense of wonderment were the guiding lights in his life's work. One is struck forcibly by this in his scholarly essay 'In Search of Chopin' which is written from a standpoint of profound humility and worship for the great gift that is music.

Alfred Cortot died in a Geneva hospital on June 15th 1962. A tradition died with him 'When the hands of Cortot are no more, Chopin will die a second time'. But he left many fine records by which we may remember him and the finest thing about them is that they LIVE. They have a remarkable vividness and presence, not in terms of sheer sound, but in terms of testimony to one man's voyage to the heart of musical discovery.

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PHONOGRAPHS AND RADIOS

By D. M. Field

Most phonograph enthusiasts would fall over themselves in the rush to buy an Edison Bell "Gem" for £2.10s. Before rushing off however, make sure you know what you are buying. The Edison Bell "Gem" phonograph was produced circa 1904 and was the English company's version of the well known American model. Twenty-one years later, Edison Bell produced another "Gem", but this time it was a two valve wireless receiver.

Collectors of Gramophones and Phonographs will find a lot in common with collectors of early radio apparatus. The personalities, companies and ideas which appear in the acoustic recording field also appear in the "steam radio" scene. Thomas A. Edison made a number of valuable contributions to the successful development of wireless telephony, the Gramophone Company eventually produced "His Master's Voice" radios and the Edison Bell Company was a major producer of radio components and receivers in the 1920's.

One of the more obvious similarity of ideas lies in "the bit the sound comes out of". The horn of the Edison "Opera" could be easily mistaken for a conventional loudspeaker horn of the early '20's, some early loudspeakers employed a "witch's hat" horn a la Edison standard while some of the Amplion wooden loudspeaker horns are typical of the "Morning Glory" pattern. Pathe made several loudspeaker types and the Gaumont Company made a Luniere pleated diaphragm loudspeaker.

A more obscure correspondence may be found when comparing the 1906 Columbia Graphophone "BC" and the S. G. Brown "Frenophone" loudspeaker of 1922/3. Without going too deeply into the mechanics of either, the Graphophone utilised the power of the motor to exert a pull on the large diaphragm of the reproducer via a friction wheel device. The amount of friction (and hence the pull on the diaphragm) was controlled by a linkage arrangement connected to the stylus bar. Thus the minute movements of the stylus caused when tracing the audio recordings directly controlled the relatively large movements of the tensioned diaphragm. In this way "sound magnification" was obtained.

In a similar manner, the "Frenophone" used a friction disc driven by a clockwork motor so that pull was again exerted on the loudspeaker diaphragm. The co-efficient of friction was varied by pads controlled by an electromagnetic device connected to the radio. The physical similarity of phonograph and loudspeaker is quite striking - a polished oblong oak box, complete with a winding handle and a cygnet horn is easily confused, at first sight, with a phonograph. I venture to suggest that many hill and dale enthusiasts, if confronted with the "Frenophone" shown in the illustration would think they had discovered a new type of phonograph!

Of course many collectors of gramophones and phonographs also collect early radio equipment. The highly desirable items in the early radio world are those manufactured before the formation of the British Broadcasting Company in 1922. These would include the Marconi Multiple Tuner (for which I would give my eye teeth!) and World War I Armed Services equipment. However although the real gold lies in the 1900 to 1922 era, there is plenty of silver still to find from the early broadcast years.

Although many amateur broadcasting stations existed before 1922 it was in November of that year when broadcasting really arrived with the formation of the British Broadcasting Company. Six major companies, who between them probably held most of the important patents, can be said to be the founder members of the BBC. These were:-

- Marcon's Wireless Telegraph Co. Ltd.
- Metropolitan Vickers Electrical Co. Ltd.
- British Thomson Houston Co. Ltd.
- General Electric Co. Ltd.
- Western Electric Co. Ltd.
- Radio Communication Co. Ltd.

These six companies provided the transmitter stations serving the country and the BBC as an entity provided programmes and staff. For this the BBC received two concessions. Firstly half the proceeds of the receiving broadcasting licence revenue paid (at least in theory) by all members of the public owning a radio; secondly all receiving apparatus for sale to the public must bear the official BBC stamp. The second concession effectively ensured that no manufacturer outside the BBC could sell any apparatus. However any bona fide manufacturer of wireless apparatus could buy shares in the BBC and was thus entitled to its benefits.

As stated, all apparatus manufactured by member companies was required to bear the BBC stamp as shown in the illustration. In fact an example of every receiver had to be submitted to the Post Office engineering department to ensure that it met the laid down requirements on interference. Hence the legend "Type Approved by the Postmaster General" did not necessarily mean that the Postmaster recommended purchase, but it did mean that owners of such a wireless would not become a public nuisance!

The BBC monopoly was for a term from and including 1st November, 1922 to 1st January, 1925 and during this time only receivers bearing the BBC stamp could be legally sold. This restriction applied to manufactured sets and there was nothing to stop amateurs constructing apparatus and using it (provided they bought a licence). What happened after January, 1925 is a little obscure, but sets began to appear without the approved mark. We have therefore a valuable method of dating and classifying old radios. If it has a BBC stamp on it, it was offered for sale to the general public (i.e. not home made) and it must be post 1922 and pre-1927. I say pre-1927 although the first agreement expired in 1925, because many sets were designed in the 1922-25 period and still offered for sale up to the end of 1926.

A favourite story of owners of old crystal sets is that they picked up the distress calls of the Titanic in 1912. If it has a BBC stamp on it, view it with a very jaundiced eye!

The illustrations for this article appear on Pages 2, 3 & 4.

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DAVID BISPHAM

by Laurie Hervingham-Root.

(Part 3)

(Continued from Volume 1, Page 212)

Columbia Twentieth Century "long play" six-inch cylinders. U.S.A. 1906.

85078 Annie Laurie

85079 Dio Possente (Faust: Gounod)

I do not know either of these records, nor do I know of anyone possessing copies of either of them. Just in passing - perhaps an American collector may have the answer to my queries; would these titles have been made at the same time as the twelve-inch disc Columbia records of the same titles recorded in 1906? Could they be identical? Were there any more titles other than those listed above?

Columbia Black and Silver label, later Banner. U.S.A. 1906.

30016 Danny Deever (Damrosch)

30018 Der Wanderer (Schubert)

30019 Erlkönig (Schubert)

30020 Who Is Sylvia? (Schubert)

30021 Hark Hark, The Lark (Schubert)

30023 Annie Laurie (Scott)

30026 Pirate Song (Gilbert)

30027 Drink to me Only (Traditional)

30036 Kathleen Mavourneen (Crouch)

30037 Dio Possente (Faust: Gounod)

I have always thought that this 1906 Columbia series of Bispham to have been his most interesting and exciting of all that he made for the Company over later years. Four Schubert songs - two in German; old ballads, two dramatic songs and an operatic item. Generally he is in excellent form here and for the most part the recordings are good. Danny Deever is inseparable from the singer. It was written for and created by him. I have given only the single sided numbers here as the more complete detail will be shown in the discography to complete this article. Certain of the above titles were available in Australia on the normal Columbia label (or Columbia Rena) while most of them could be imported as early as 1910 in the double-sided American form. They cost 7s.6d. each as against the higher priced Celebrity items listed in the same catalogue. These ranged from 10s. to 25s. each. Unfortunately for the record importer (buyer), all the above records were big items of other artists. Generally both music and artists were of a highly uninteresting nature, but there were two exceptions, one of which was Arimondi singing a Faust excerpt coupled with Bispham's own item from the same opera. Years ago, one of these Black and Silver label records passed through my hands.

The detail of the song and singer was handwritten on an otherwise black label in white ink.
30016 Danny Deever (Damrosch)

The famous Kipling poem set to music by Damrosch, written for, and dedicated to the singer. Bispham tells in his autobiography how his singing of this gruesome ballad in the presence of the poet so affected him that he had to leave the room before the singer had finished it. An apology later cleared up any misunderstanding that might have occurred. A highly dramatic and exciting song telling of the regimental hanging of a member who had killed a sleeping comrade. Bispham sings and interprets the song magnificently whether it is the definitive version, I would not be prepared to assert. In any case, it is a superb version. In Australia this record was issued under the number Columbia 207, under which number both versions of this song appeared. Certainly a record for everyone, despite the lurid story. Thoroughly recommended.
30018 Der Wanderer (Schubert)

One of the finest of Schubert's lieder. Sung in German and the first of two versions made for Columbia. Very finely sung and with great artistic feeling. Somehow I feel that the final result is not the perfect job the singer set out to give us, due because, I think, that much of the finesse used by the singer is lost in the inherent surface noise of the record. The low E at the end is nearly inaudible. None-the-less, it is a fine performance and one I like very much. Bispham uses a nice tempo (although I have known tempi I prefer more) and has some fine examples of tone colouring. Generally speaking it is a fine performance and one I can recommend either for the Bispham specialist or the general collector.

30019 Erlkönig (Schubert)

One of the greatest lieder ever written. Dare I write that I prefer the lesser known Loeme setting? I also like this version very much. Bispham makes this one of the finest performances on record by a male singer. There are certain versions by female singers I like as well or better. It is not my purpose to discuss these records here. An excellent tempo is used and a good balance maintained between voice and piano. There is a fine differentiation of voice used to depict the various characters in this song, four in all. The Narrator, the Father, the Child and the Erlkönig (Death). All these are finely delineated with care and artistry. It is not a pedantic presentation as my remark "with care" might infer. It is a virile performance and one of the best ever. Sung in German.

30020 Who is Sylvia? (Schubert)

Here we have the second version of this justly famous song. It also brings to light Bispham's intention to use the English language in lied where he can. A famous Shakespeare poem set to music by Schubert is one of the most popular the composer ever wrote. The singer has a further amount of time to sing this song, but even so, it still seems to me to be slightly hurried. None-the-less it is generally a good polished and artistic performance. I like the handling of the fine note descending figure occurring near the end of each verse.

30021 Hark Hark, the Lark (Schubert)

A further setting of Shakespeare verses, possibly even more popular and famous than the previous record. This version is very fine, but it lacks the sparkle and elan of the famous G & T. This may be the fault of the singer or it may be the fault of the record - I would not like to make a stand on this point. It may be the onset of age which was the cause of this. Again, a most acceptable performance and along with the previous record, one which can grace any collection. A further example of the singer's predilection of popularising the English language whenever possible - here in a Schubert song.

30023 Annie Laurie (Scott)

One of the highwatermarks of Bispham's Columbia output. A truly superb version of this once popular song. I wonder how some of these old songs would be accepted by modern concert-going audiences of the present day? Probably not at all, no matter how well sung they may be.

Whatever the answer Bispham gives us what I consider to be the definitive performance of this song. Yes, he inserts some changes in the last verse. These are so artistically sung as to make them quite acceptable and I am something of a purist in these things! The top notes in each verse are excellently sung and the phrasing of these in the last verse could hardly be bettered. These top notes are the rocks on which so many singers - male and female - have come to grief. Magnificent in every way. I prefer this version to the later one because it has piano accompaniment. Fine recording and good balance between voice and piano with some superb legato.

30026 Pirate Song (Gilbert)

From the serenity of Annie Laurie to the semi-humorous dramatics of the Pirate Song. An extended version of the famous ditty in Stevenson's 'Treasure Island' - an extra, and appropriate, verse being added. The basis of the song is "Fifteen men on a dead man's chest" which meant fifteen men being marooned on a desert island with no hope of being saved. Bispham sings this short ditty with a ferocious humour and dramatic verve which is entirely captivating. Good diction is heard, except where the recording does not catch some of the words. Top notes are good and a fine top G brings the song to an end. A friend of mine who heard the singer in Australia just prior to World War I told me that Bispham used to finish the programme with this song. Bispham used to wave a chair about in a threatening and piratical (?) manner to give the song more emphasis and vigour. The definitive version.

30027 Drink to me only (Traditional)

This record is entirely unknown to me. It must have had a very short life in the catalogue, as it was undoubled, as far as I know, and was most probably replaced by the rather unsatisfactory recording of 1909.

30036 Kathleen Mavourneen (Crouch)

Bispham's last two recordings in this 1906 group have the doubtful advantage of an orchestral accompaniment. He sings this song very well but somehow it does not "click" with me, which may be due to my lack of preference for the song itself. Let there be no mistake, Bispham gives an excellent account of both himself and the song. The 1911 catalogue even picks out this song as a "veritable gold nugget". We must accept the Company's sales description for what it is worth; forget it and listen to the record for ourselves. Only then can we judge its merits, which are considerable. The reader must not be deterred by my own reactions to the song, but listen for himself and form his own opinion.

30037 Dio Possente (Faust: Gounod)

One of the singer's very rare incursions into the realm of grand opera on record. I find it a heavy, laboured and somewhat uneasy performance. At the same time, it is a highly artistic approach. The strictures are the result of what appears a transposition of key which the singer uses. It is more than likely the high tessitura of the original key would have caused him trouble. He took the obvious course of transposing down to a key which would be easier for him to handle. This is well and good, but the ponderous approach is inclined to stultify the whole thing. The singing is good but the interpretation is artistic and dull. The reprise of the opening melody is well handled. The final note has a most curious affect. It seems to "melt" into the accompaniment and sounds as if the singer is soprano. A complete mixture of vocal and orchestral overtones seems to be the cause of this curiosity.

Columbia Tricolour (or, Banner) Label. U.S.A. 1908.

30148 Down Among the Dead Men (Traditional)

30149 Faithful Johnnie (Beethoven)

Evidently only two records were the result of this particular visit to the studio. It would be hard to imagine two more contrasting titles than these - an old time drinking song, circa 1700, and a Beethoven setting of a Scottish ballad. Both have orchestral accompaniment and the recording is good for the period.

30148 Down Among the Dead Men

The music is an old English melody and words by John Dyer (1700 - 1758). Before I go further, I must say that 'dead men' referred to in the song are the empty bottles which were thrown under the table. The only bodies thereunder would be those drinkers who could not take it - and would be sleeping peacefully under the table! To me this is one of Bispham's best records. He has a wonderful time "hamming it up" in a fine interpretation which can best be described as "restrained bubulous"! He sings in a slow tempo - rather musical for this song - with a rhythmic swing and verve which is captivating. In each verse he sings one phrase twice - the thrice repeated 'down' - and in the last verse, at the end, a fine top note - probably G - is thrown in for good measure. One of his very best, probably the definitive version. In U.S.A. it was given the oddest of couplings - the later version of Schubert's 'Der Wanderer'. Surely there was never a stranger backing.

30149 Faithful Johnnie (Beethoven)

Except for a very few examples, I have never cared for Beethoven the songwriter. Among his many songs were settings of Scottish ballads - this being one of them. It is a mournful ditty at best, doing little either for the singer or the composer. It is a most lugubrious song and possibly should be sung by a female voice. This kind of change did not unduly worry the audiences of the period - thus we have 'Annie Laurie' and 'The Lass with the Delicate Air' also sung by women. Bispham is at his most solemn and sings well, but it is only for the specialist - either Bispham or Beethoven.

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WARPED RECORDS

Dear Mr. Bayly,

Some years ago I left some 78 r.p.m. records on a seat in my car in the sunshine which caused them to warp badly.

On enquiry I received this reply from H.M.V.:-

"It is rather doubtful whether you will be able to completely eliminate the warping, but the accompanying notes may be useful ...

Hold the record by the edge, between the fingers of each hand with the surface of the record at right angles to the palms. With the flat of the record facing the fire (preferably a gas or electric fire) and about eighteen inches away from it, so that the tips of the fingers are pointing directly towards the fire, turn the record round between the fingers so that every part of the record becomes nicely warm. Then turn the record over and warm the other face in the same way. When it is warm, on no account should the temperature of the record exceed 110 degrees Fahrenheit, place it between two sheets of plate-glass which have been thoroughly cleaned and dried. A moderate weight should be placed on top of the glass and the record left for some time to ensure that it is quite cold before the pressure is removed. Plate glass is necessary because generally speaking, ordinary glass is not always perfectly flat."

I hope that this will stimulate some ideas or experiences on the subject.

Sincerely,

J.F.C. Heather.

EDITOR'S NOTE: I feel that the glass plates should be mildly warmed before placing the record between them, because, if cold, they would chill the record before their salutary effect could take place. Going on to Long Play records ... I did flatten some which were badly warped in transit across the Atlantic by placing them in my electric oven. I laid one upon a piece of perfectly flat metal. Keeping the oven door open, I watched the record intently and as it fell flat, I pulled the "tray" with it on from the oven rapidly and chilled with cold water. It soon "set". I started the oven from cold, so there was no residual heat. In my case, the record was warped beyond playing, so the resultant slight surface noise for about one inch was a lesser

Continued on page 17

'His Master's Voice'

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Model L.W.O. of 1918.



R E S E A R C H

"J U M B O"

Assistance sought.....

"It now transpires that the number of discs issued by the Jumbo Company is much greater than originally supposed.

It might be appropriate to give some background information relating to Jumbo Records, but firstly a little pre-history is necessary as they were a sister label to Odeon and Dischi Fonotipia. Ullman Freres, established in London, had introduced the Odeon and Fonotipia labels to Great Britain in 1904 and were the sole agents for these labels until they were succeeded by the Russell Hunting Company in the Autumn of 1906. Russell Hunting were in turn succeeded by the newly formed Sterling & Hunting Company in October of the same year and their sole agency lasted until they went bankrupt in the early summer of 1908.

Barnet, Samuells & Sons Ltd who had been factoring for the British Zonophone records

records, now became Sole Agents for Odeon and Fonotipia discs and, in June 1908, announced that the new Jumbo Records were to be introduced by them to the British record buying public.

Odeon in Britain, had, by now, their own recording studios and factory which came under the jurisdiction of Barnett, Samuells & Sons Ltd. from 1st August and the first Jumbo records were put on sale in September 1908 with an initial listing of over 500 titles at three shillings each. The address of both Jumbo Records and Barnett, Samuells was identical, being at 32, Worship Street, London E.C.

The first mention of Jumbo at all is in connection with the founding of Jumbo Record Fabrik Berlin S.W.. Ritterstrasse 47, in February 1908 with a capital of 20,000 marks.

The English Jumbo records began a series at No. 1. and we have been able to trace discs to number 1104 (with some blanks) which was issued in January 1914. We must here gratefully acknowledge the valuable help given to us by collectors who knew that we were undertaking this research.

Our listing to the present has yielded the following facts - established or presumed.

A) The discs are ten-inch double sided and the catalogue numbers are found, (i) On the label only, (ii) In the 'run-off' only, (iii) In both places.

B) Each type of recorded material has its own block of category/control numbers, viz—

A20,000 British Bands (includes pseudonyms Jumbo Military Band)

A21,000 European Bands(" " " " ")

A22,000 British Bands and all instrumental solo instrumentals.

A23,000 Male vocal solos (The comic songs were later given 28,000)

A25,000 Female vocal solos

A27,000 Concerted vocal or instrumental

A28,000 Descriptive and Comedy

A59,000 "TRIPLETONES" Military Bands. - - The Tripletones were claimed to reproduce three times louder than the other discs and were intended for outdoor entertainment.

C) Matrix numbers inscribed in the 'wax' and sometimes covered by the label but still discernable in the right lighting conditions, carried the following prefixes.....

LX0 for London recordings; XB0 for Berlin recordings; MO for Milan recordings; YB0 for New York (?) masters. It is interesting to note that Odeon used LX for London and XB for Germany, and Fonotipia (rarely? MO for Milan.) There is also a P0.

D) It seems the policy with Jumbo Records to replace deleted records with new recordings using the old catalogue numbers but

prefixing the number with 'A'. Later some of these 'A' discs were deleted (1913) and the number was again used, but now prefixed 'B'. We have noticed three of these 'B's.

During the period 1908 - 1913, two matters of some importance which may have a bearing on what follows are, (i) In 1911 Carl Lindström of Germany bought 'Fonotipia (London) Ltd', which it was stated controlled the output of Odeon/Fonotipia/Talking Machine Co products. Barnett, Samuells & Sons Ltd continued as Sole Agents. (ii) Carl Lindström (London) Ltd was formed in 1913 with factory and offices in England on a capital of £1,000 in £1 shares.

After January 1914 no listings of Jumbo records can be found in the appropriate publications of that time. Nor can there be found listings of Odeon. It is known that Jumbo go on for another 400 records and possibly up to 700. We have details of some of these higher numbered discs sent to us by collectors and it is apparent that the distribution or manufacture of Jumbo Records underwent an organisational change because the 'A' prefixed category/control numbers have disappeared and in their place we have un-prefixed numbers in the 35,000 and 36,000 range. (We have also seen a 'Valkyrie' record with a Jumbo master having a 37,000 control number. We have also seen a 'Venus' similarly. There is no evidence of LX0 numbers on discs with control/category numbers on discs with control numbers in 35,000; 36,000; 37,000; 38,000 ranges.

Matrices appear to continue the same series as prior to 1914, which really indicates a continuance of manufacture by the same manufacturers. Lindström (London) Ltd and Fonotipia (London) Ltd closed in 1916 and were ordered to be wound up under the 'Trading with the Enemy Act'. Carl Lindström (London) Ltd was at 77, City Road, and Fonotipia (London) Ltd was at 1, Broad Street Place. Both had the same official in charge.

Having no further written sources to research we are now firmly in the hands of our fellow collectors to whom we strongly appeal to come forward with any information which they have concerning Jumbo Records. We would like all details of discs in their possession and of any pamphlets, supplements or catalogues. Jumbo is a 'key' label as many of the masters were subsequently used on such labels as Ariel, Coliseum, Parlophone, Regal, Scala, Valkyrie and Venus, so the importance of the matrix numbers is self evident. The 35,000; 36,000; 37,000 and 38,000 controls also appear on Scala, Ariel, Guardsman, Valkyrie and Regal, et alia.

A word about Venus records. I am 'sticking my neck out' in asserting, on the strength of the few I have seen, that Venus records carry the same titles, artists, matrices, category/control numbers as Jumbos. They are in effect Jumbo Records so the appeal concerning Jumbo Records applies equally to Venus records.

We do have mention that Jumbo Records were factored by Hogg and Anderson of Bristol in 1916 who claimed to be the Sole Agents. If any reader in the 'west country' can throw light on this firm, whether or not they still exist, we should be most grateful for this information. We have reason to think that the demise of Jumbo Records was 1916.

The Jumbo numbers for which we should like information are:- 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 401, 425, 426, 427, 428, 433, 434, 437, 438, 510, 535, 537, 566, 567, 568, 595, 612, 631, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 721, 722, 735, 739, 740, 754, 755, 756, 757, 776, 827, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 859, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 910, 918, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 1015, 1038, 1039, 1041, 1045, 1046, 1048, 1060, 1105 and above.

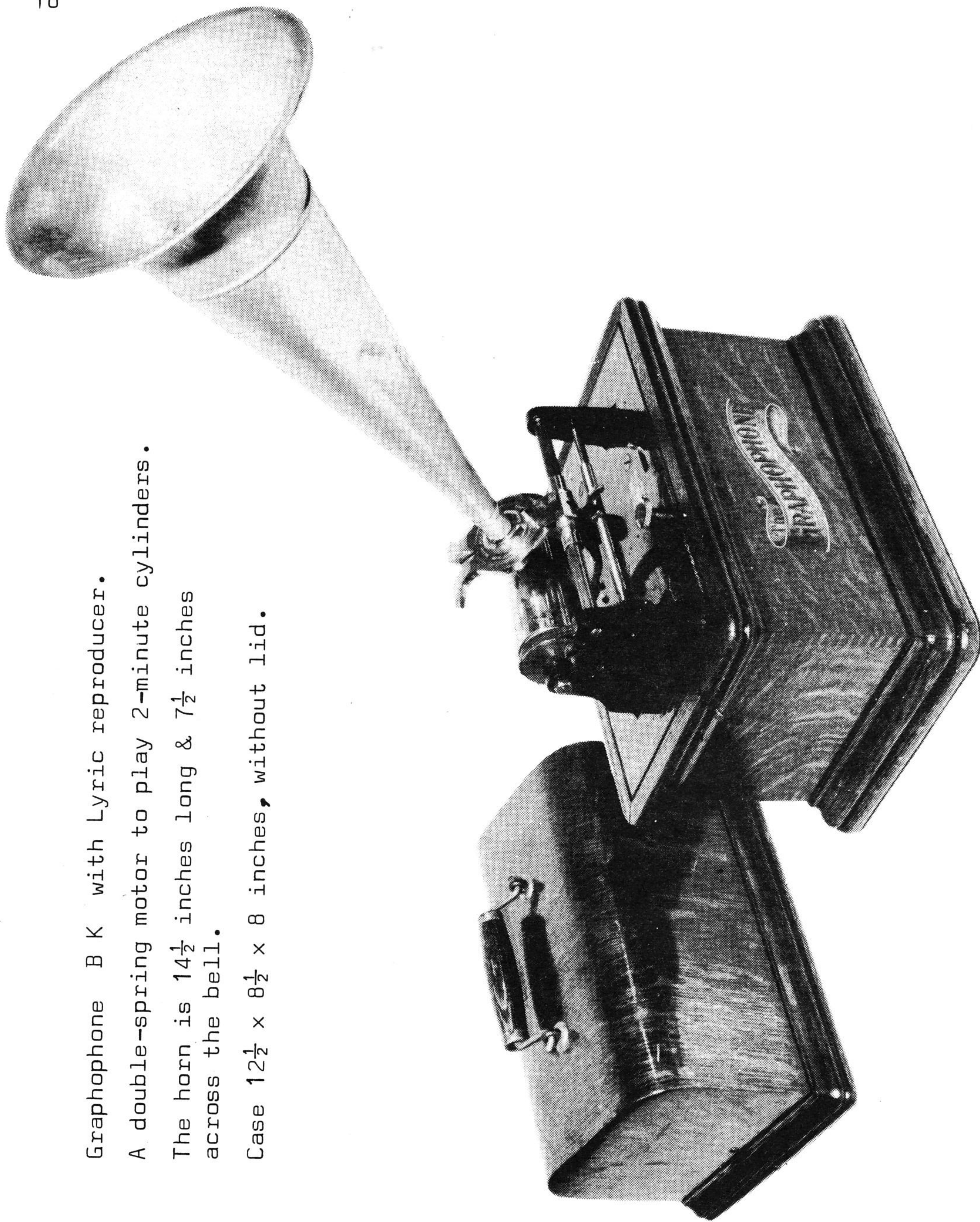
Should any of you have any Venus Records with these numbers please submit the information contained thereon also any Jumbo or Venus records with the catalogue numbers prefixed 'A' or 'B'. These last are most important as, in the nature of things, there is no continuity about them so precluding the making of a 'blanks' list.

Valkyrie Records, sold by Catesby's Stores in London (who went bankrupt last year), used Jumbo records and can be a further source of information. Unfortunately, for our purposes, Valkyrie had their own catalogue numbers, but some of the Jumbo material used has the original catalogue number in the 'run - off' and so is readily identifiable as those others that have the Fonotipia 'out-of-pitch' single groove (sometimes called a missing groove) in the playing area. All these Valkyrie discs can yield information of artists and titles and also matrix numbers and control numbers.

Another further source of information may be the original sleeves from Jumbo Records. If any readers have any of these I would welcome the loan (or opportunity to purchase) of same, even if the sleeve has no relevant details."

Editor Continues.... I hope that anyone possessing Jumbo, Valkyrie & Venus Records will send information, as detailed as possible please, to Frank Andrews, 46, Aboyne Road, London NW 10 OHA. He is preparing the Jumbo numerical listing for publication by 'The Talking Machine Review International'. The Jumbo catalogue contained records by some important artists in the field of lighter entertainment. You can see from the listing of numbers above, showing the discs for which we lack details, that the majority of the work has been accomplished. Thus we hope that those possessing any Jumbos will check to see if any are those of which we need information.

Graphophone B K with Lyric reproducer.
A double-spring motor to play 2-minute cylinders.
The horn is $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches long & $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches
across the bell.
Case $12\frac{1}{2}$ x $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 inches, without lid.



evil! I would admit this to be an inexperienced method. It might also be used for 78 r.p.m. 17
discs. If you have access to an industrial oven in which the temperature can be controlled
without fear, you would be well-advised to use it rather than my own "experimental" system!
Keep in mind the 110 degrees Fahrenheit recommended before. On another occasion when I was
washing a Harry Champion record which I had just "junked", I must have had the water too hot,
for as I immersed the disc, it suddenly became limp! I quickly placed it on the flat "worktop"
by the sink, and all was well. This latter might be another way to flatten a disc. May we
benefit from the experience of others?

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. Bayly,

In the December issue of The Talking Machine Review you promise us further excerpts from
Laurie Hervingham-Root's study of David Bispham's recordings which, as the author rightly says,
have unaccountably been overlooked. However, when the author remarks, with regard to David
Bispham's voice, that he found it to be a somewhat unmusical one, I can only assume that he
never heard Mr. Bispham sing. I have no knowledge of his recordings but I did hear him sing,
both on the concert platform and in the theatre, and he was an excellent singer and could not
possibly be described as either "unmusical", "rough" or "dull". If his recordings make him
sound like any one, or all, of these uncomplimentary adjectives, then the only explanation must
be that Mr. Bispham's voice did not lend itself happily to acoustical recording. This can be
said of several singers of this particular vintage. What really matters, and what should be
remembered, is that David Bispham was a first-class singer and a distinguished artist. If his
recordings do not give a true picture of his vocal qualities, one can only express one's regret.
I count myself fortunate that I actually heard him sing, and on one memorable occasion met him.

There are compensations in being eighty-six years of age.

Yours sincerely,

George Baker.

* * * * *

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS

On the front cover we give you a picture of Toots Paka's Hawaiians who recorded for
Edison. Miss Paka and her 'group' toured the United States variety (etc.) theatres around 1910-
11, at which period her recordings for Edison cylinders were made. The artists were all
Hawaiians. No doubt many having the cylinders may have been wondering which sex 'Toots'
signified, just as I was until first seeing the pictures. Our illustration was taken from a
copy of the Edison Phonograph Monthly.

On page 25 is a reproduction of a Victor Company advertisement for fibre needles dating
from 1911, showing an early interest in prolonging the life of records.

The Paillard Company of Switzerland produced a gramophone whose turntable was made to
revolve by hot air rising to it. Slow burning spirit was lit in a container under a vane
which rising hot air from the flame caused to rotate. Two views of one such gramophone are
shown on pages 26-27. We are grateful to Mr. W. Denton who kindly sent us photographs of his.
The Paillard Company exported these to other countries, and in London, Messrs. Craies & Stavridi
show one in their 1913 'Apollo' gramophone catalogue, wherein it was claimed that one filling
would give twelve hours continuous playing. Paillard also marketed a turntable driven by hot
air to be used for revolving displays in shop windows, in which application the long duration
of continuous revolve would be practical. The H.M.V. 'Pigmy Grand' Gramophone was among the first
having an internal horn, being introduced in 1909. Its portability was emphasised, as one may
see on page 28. (The first internal horn model of the Gramophone - H.M.V. - Company had been
the Gramophone Grand of 1907). We are grateful to Mr. W. Gallacher who sent us the original.

Many collectors have the reprint Graphophone catalogue that dates from perhaps 1905. This reprint has been available for some time now. Various floor stands and horn cranes are shown in this catalogue. Four varieties of floor stand are listed at from 75 cents up to \$2 in price. The number one type was \$2 & the most substantial in construction. I have found there is actually two of the number one variety. In 1901 mention was made in a catalogue for that year of the "improved stand number one". The early number one stand had three features unlike the late number one. The early had the upper rod comprised of one piece bent to shape while the late number one stand had a "ball joint affair". By this means a straight rod was joined to a curved rod making the upper portion of the stand actually composed of two rods instead of one. Also the late number one had a machine screw to hold the chain on and a locking device to lock the three legs. This locking device was evidently what was meant by the term "Improved Columbia horn stand" or "Improved stand number one". Most number one stands found are of the late type which is to be expected. The early form of the number one was probably discontinued in 1900. Also in this 1905 reprint catalogue on page 29 one may see two horn supports, one a stand for table use and the other a lightweight crane formed of a bent rod. This crane might be used to support a 14 inch or 18 inch brass or steel and brass horn. Many collectors are confused by the existence of two machine screws in the bedplate of many models of cylinder Graphophone. One screw is behind the mandrel near the belt tightening screw. The other screw is to the left of the speed control screw or in the left hand corner of the bedplate nearest the front. These two screws supported this little horn crane when it was used on a machine. The same crane was used for either the 14 inch or 18 inch horn. Thus, two screws were provided to make up for the length difference. A cast foot was provided with the crane. In the photo on page 29 of the reprint catalogue one cannot tell what holds the crane. The foot looks like a cylinder attached to a rectangular solid. The cylinder portion has a hole drilled for the crane and a machine screw to tighten against the crane to hold it in the foot. I have not seen one of these cranes but would like to sometime. I have one foot. I presume the crane was tempered steel and nickel plated. The horns used, by the way, have the end ferrule soldered in on an angle. The end of the horn looks bent over. Many Columbia cylinder Graphophones have these two machine screws that seem to have no function. Collectors should not be dismayed and think something is missing. I have seen these two screws on machines as early as the type A. These two screws are always round head screws. The one screw that serves to tighten the belt is always located at the middle, rear of the bedplate and is a "cylindrical" head screw. Judging from the size of the hole in the foot I have, the crane must have been 9/64 inch in diameter or quite close to this. In a catalogue estimated to date from late 1908 there is shown a type BK "Jewel" cylinder Graphophone with morning glory type horn and crane. Also in the book, "From Tinfoil to Stereo" there is seen in the plates section a BK with this same crane. This is the only case I have seen of a crane shown on a machine except for the type BM Graphophone. At this time (circa 1908) Columbia listed horns actually made by the Hawthorne Sheble Co. I would guess that for several years Hawthorne Sheble Co. supplied the Graphophone people with various equipment. The Busy Bee company, O'Neil-James of Chicago, appear to also have sold horns made by Hawthorne Sheble and no doubt cranes as well. Some of the same horns listed in the Graphophone catalogue for 1908 are seen in the 1906 Busy Bee catalogue.

MAGAZINE REVIEWS

By Rikki Thompson

"Jazz Forum", the magazine of the European Jazz Federation.

Editorial address: 20, Rutkowskiego, P.O.B.282, Warsaw, Poland.

This excellently-produced magazine was in its fourth year of publication in No.2 of 1970

which we received, and had 120 pages. Although there was little about the jazz scene in Great Britain, our copy is printed in English, and gives a coverage of news from most European countries. We are shown what happened when 'jazz met Tunisia', given a short article on jazz in U.S.S.R. and various pieces and pictures tell us about various American jazz musicians visiting Poland mainly. Nesuhi Ertegun, now President of the 'Atlantic Record Company', but who has been connected with the production of jazz records for some three decades tells us that 'jazz sells'. There is another in what appears to be a series of biographies of Euro Jazz Personalities, featuring Belgium in this issue, among whom we find Walter de Block known by our Editor since just after World War II. There are other small items on a variety of topics. All-in-all, a useful magazine for those whose outlook is international and who wish to be advised of the international scene. Subscription is quoted as one dollar U.S. per issue, but subscription orders may be sent to many European capitals.

- * "Der Jazzfreund" December 1970, edited by Gerhard Conrad of Schlesienstr.11, 575 Menden, West Germany.

This magazine is in German, but like the magazine above, is European in its outlook. Mr. Conrad writes on Jazz in the Soviet Union, in a long and comprehensive article. There are several pages of record reviews which are by no means confined to German releases or artists, but being chiefly of American origin. Production is 'offset' on sheets approximately 8½ x 11½ ins. Again, having only one issue by which to judge the magazine, we found it interesting, being from another country and giving another view to a familiar theme.

- * "Doctor Jazz" Editorial address:- Chassestraat 37. Amsterdam, Holland.

Published bi-monthly. Our review number, November, 1970, reveals another excellently-produced magazine of about the same size as 'Talking Machine Review'. While most of the magazine is in Dutch, an important article on Freddie Keppard's recordings by Engelbert Wengel is in English. Anyone knowing German can make some headway with the text in Dutch, and such things as lists of records, discographies and titles to pictures are 'international'. "Doctor Jazz" is the oldest jazz magazine in Holland, the issue under review being number forty-four. One picture photographed by J. van Galen Last shows 'The Happy Wanderers' band which is a familiar sight in Oxford Street, London, where their fairly 'hot' renderings of all sorts of tunes can be heard above the roar of the traffic. Other articles deal with the St. Louis Bands, Willie Humphrey, and George Mitchell. Again, another view on a well-known subject, including record reviews, which are always useful.

* * * * *

HOW I FOUND A RARE SET OF CYLINDERS

by Dai Jones

Rex Cylinders 582 to 765.

"La Boheme" by Puccini - complete on 183 two-minute cylinders.

Although many years have elapsed, I still vividly recall the thrill of finding this set of cylinders in a junk shop in Nether Poppleton (Yorkshire). Some of you interested in railways may remember this little-used halt between Harrogate and York; in the days when we had a good service of trains.

I knew that I should miss my connection at York, so I decided to break my journey at this village, (ten houses, a pub and a church), (in that order), and continue a few hours later. After a visit to the pub (beer flat) and the church (closed) my eye alighted on the combined forge, funeral undertaker, junkshop (one can see the connection between the latter two). I entered, elbowing my way between some children watching some horses being shod, past some wares of the other trade to the junk shop at the back.

This was a kind of "lean-to" of corrugated iron with an assortment of windows, obviously from demolished houses. There was the usual collection of things; brass bedsteads, rusty electric iron, musty-smelling three-volume novels by Thackeray, etc. To one corner was a huge

pile of things supported by a sideboard minus one leg, propped up on an orange box. About halfway up, projecting between an armchair on its side and a mattress (itself under other miscellanea) was a black box which I immediately identified as a cylinder carrying-case. I almost forgot to say, this was after I had spent some considerable time sorting through a pile of discs consisting of 119 by Layton & Johnstone, 36 by Jack Payne, 7 of Gigli singing "Che Gelida Manina", about 491 by various military bands, several songs by a certain tenor (badly warped) and a pile of ocarina soli by Signor Taparino.- Hence I was a little dejected.

On making my way back to the scene of youthful spectators of horse-shoeing, I found the proprietor who was just rolling himself a cigarette of what looked like, and later smelled like, a mixture of stinging nettles and wild parsley (remember it was during World War II). I managed to persuade him into the junk shop. On arrival he said that he was afraid that I meant those boxes of cylinders half way up the heap and wondered if I could come back the next day when Charlie would be around. I said that I could not because I was going home on leave and had already lost two precious hours for which the suitable compensation might be some cylinders. After some ominous muttering we launched an attack on the pile. Now, you must realise that for the whole time we were dismantling and disentangling the heap we were in jeopardy of being crushed by it because the sideboard was poorly balanced on the orange box and because there must have been an electrical gadget somewhere in the pile for a cable frequently entwined itself around an object we wished to disengage. But to abbreviate this narrative, we were successful.

Yes, there were several boxes with partitions lined with red velvet. I was still telling myself that they would all be mouldy anyway and hardly dared to look. My eyes first noticed the etched etiquette "Rex" on the end of a cylinder and then "La Boheme - part 127". I gasped and then quickly converted it to a feigned sneeze, for otherwise my wily opponent might raise the price from three pence to three shillings each (prices were lower in those days!). I ran my eyes rapidly over the box, seeing "part 25", "part 98", "part 132", "part 1". I knew I had stumbled upon the famous Battistini/Minnie Brown/Erschov set, made several years before their unissued (but subsequently pirated on L.P.) records for the Phonograph and Wheelbarrow Company.

Inwardly I was elated, but outwardly assumed the air of boredom and pulled a few cylinders out of their positions in a lazy manner, somewhat like my overfed minah bird who politely pecks at the sunflower seeds which my maiden aunt always brings. I was still thinking of that three pence to three shillings touch while trying to assess if the whole set was there. (It was as you have gathered).

We were just settling down to an oriental haggle over the price when an attractive blonde tapped on the window from the outside. For some reason which I shall never understand, the vendor seemed to be in great haste and the bargain was sealed well to my advantage. How I lumped that lot to the railway station I shall never know. Of course, I was some 28 years younger then. Nor shall I forget my anxiety for them as I drove across London in a taxi during an air raid with things falling all around. On arrival home, owing to folks greeting me, it was a few hours before I could settle down to the cylinders. Some needed a little dusting on my army shirt, but they all played well.

Erschov sang as well as he always did. One of our nationally-known critics declares that he is a little flat on the B and A in "Regarde el banestro tu e sotto" (the aria warning the drunken landlord about the condition of the stairs to the garret). I deny this for surely the slight quiver in the voice is a recording fault. To me he sings with his usual lyrical charm. It is unfortunate that it requires two cylinders for "Che Gelida Manina". However, the voice hypnotises me so I hardly notice the interruption.

Minnie Brown sings Mimi wonderfully throughout. Her "Mi Chiamino Mimi" is a joy to

hear with its poignant phrasing. This is all the more credit to her, for as we have all read in "Blenkinsop & Ricordi", she had a boil on the back of her neck at the time.

Battistini is adequate, and although not reaching his highest attainments, certainly equals the recordings of the two arias from the same opera which he recorded for the early-electric Jumbo records, (light blue label, large lettering).

The only disappointment is Merveille Anisette who sings a very mundane "Musetta's Waltz Song". Also, Signor Alessandro Carrote, conducting the accompaniment by the Rex Military Band, tends to race the tempo a little, probably to complete the song on two cylinders. This was cheese-paring when considering how many cylinders this set occupies.

It is interesting to recall that Madame Anisette threw one of her tantrums about half way through the mammoth operation of recording this set. The whole thing was delayed for ten days until her manager was able to persuade her to return to the studio.

Despite the desire for an electrically-operated phonograph when playing these cylinders, it is still my favourite version of the opera and despite its rarity, I am not prepared to sell it to anyone - not even for all the proverbial tea in China.

* * * * *

COLUMBIA THRU SEARS - PART 5

by Peter Betz

Spring 1907

Nothing new appears this trip except some juggling around midst the cheaper machinery. Three Harvards appear as #5 (\$9.90), #6 (\$14.00), and finally an aluminum tone arm model #9 \$18.50, all of which logically raises the question of what happened to numbers 7 and 8?

Fall, 1907

Heading the cylinder line up is an odd little Columbia Graphophone seldom encountered. I do not know the model designation, nor any source for a picture of one outside of Mr. Larry Schlick's book "A Portfolio of Early Phonographs" page 33, on which it appears as an Oxford, and also page 34 where it wears its proper Columbia garb. Sears of course sold it as the Oxford, at \$14.90 with 24 tan waxers and a small horn. This small Graphophone, with measurements approximating the Q series, sports an early form of the Lyric reproducer, or perhaps, more accurately, a cheaper form on which the small diameter reproducer and its carrier arm are one piece. The average man can hold this Graphophone in one hand, palm up. Unlike the Q and BX, there is a small cabinet with the works under it. Some years ago I had occasion to examine one of these, but not to the extent of getting into the guts of it. Suffice it to say it played well, although the small reproducer did not allow for much volume. This was apparently Columbia's last attempt at a small, inexpensive cylinder graphophone.

On the disc scene, Sears was seemingly ready to abandon the Harvard trade name, for Harvard discs were being offered now at 14¢ each. A small Harvard disc player, pre tone-arm type sold for \$16.00 with 36 of these 7" Harvard discs and two larger models, not so strangely resembling Columbia brand disc graphophones of a few years back, were also present under the Harvard name.

Of discographic interest, a one page list of Marconi Velvet Tone Columbia paper discs was printed, available at the high price of 75¢. Numbers here go up to 400, and about 300 are included with a few numbers skipped every so often in the series. Using this as a base I attempted for some time to fill in the gaps and round up all the Marconi discs for publication, but, although several people added a few numbers, the project is far from complete above number 400.

Spring 1908

From the previous fall little was changed. The Marconi records were no longer listed.

The little Columbia Graphophone described as a Fall entry reappeared with a small horn supported by the cabinet and a 'flexible tone arm', see Schlick's "A Portfolio of Early Phonographs", p33. Offered at \$17.00 plus 24 tan wax cyls., it should have been a good buy.

Fall 1908

For \$9.90, one could now purchase the little Puck type Columbia A0 Graphophone plus 50 tan wax cyls, a further indication of the fact that Sears must have had large quantities of these records on hand when the moulded records came in, and/or bought up what American Graphophone had on hand when the change to XP records was made. Two uncommon, late Columbia Graphophones appeared this time, the former an Imperial BQ 2 minute machine featuring an over-record reproducer (a la Edison model 0) spring contact type, connected via flexible arm to a horn supported by an arm attached to the rear of the cabinet. This grandeur was expensive at \$50.00 as was a similar but more plain-looking Monarch B0 at \$45.00. Made late in the history of Columbia cylinder machine production, these models are more scarce than some earlier ones which saw longer production life.

Spring 1909

This issue marks the beginning of disc domination over cylinder for the first time in Sears. Four new Columbia disc graphophones with tapered aluminum tone arm were offered, the LE (\$.9.45), the OD (\$11.40), the JF (\$14.90) and the RV (\$18.80). No, I am not making these Types up out of friends initials. They are all older, smaller machine units with the arm added, hence their low prices. The first 12" Oxford discs make their appearance in a small list at 58¢ each. It is also their last showing. The old BX type cylinder graphophone reappears as a Harvard for \$7.50.

Fall 1909

The only item of unusual interest here is the mounting on two disc Graphophones of Music Master wood horns. These appeared under the Oxford trade name as the AW at \$.27.90, and the BW at \$39.35. At one time I felt the Music Master wood horn was an exclusive Edison phonograph feature of this period, however I recently obtained a Victor IV which carried not the standard Victor wood horn, but one clearly labelled Music Master. It was not 'tricked up' but appears to have been an original part of the machine. Now we see that Columbia also sported them for a while, so apparently the manufacturer was more independent of Edison's works than many of us have thought.

Spring 1910

No Spring 1910 catalog was included on the microfilm which I studied, and which claims to be a complete run of Sears catalogs.

Fall, 1910

Nothing new appears in this Fall catalog, and it is substantially the same as Fall, 1909.

Spring 1911

No Spring 1911 catalog was included on the microfilm which I studied, and which claims to be a complete run of Sears catalogs.

Fall 1911

The first of the internal horn graphophones was offered this fall in the form of 'The Hornless Oxford' and, at \$24.79, it closely resembled the table model Victor IV internal horn talking machine. The more expensive external horn graphophones, mainly in the \$30.00 to \$50.00 range were still offered, but were generally reduced at least \$10.00, as if the writing was on the wall for sound quality versus stylization.

Oxford Indestructible cylinders were offered for the first time at 27¢ each or \$3.20 per dozen. Cylinders called Oxford way records were available also, and, from the numbering, these are obviously Columbia moulded production. These are worth noticing as there are included some 40,000 series cylinders identified as being by Bryan, Taft, and Peary. (18¢ or \$2.15 doz.)

Only two cylinder players were offered, the Oxford type GH at \$13.75 and the Type WM at \$18.75. The GH is a reappearance of the small machine detailed under Fall, 1907 Catalog, and the WM looks like the BK or Jewel model. Both have horns behind the cabinet attached via metal support, and flexible tone arm from reproducer to horn. The only disc records advertised were 10" Oxfords at 30¢ each or \$3.50 a dozen, there being about 2 pages listed.

On the last page an interesting 'Oxford Bargains' section contained the following:-

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. 12 7" Oxford discs for 65¢ | 5. 12 10" Oxford discs for \$1.62 |
| 2. 25 7" " " " \$1.32 | 6. 25 " " " " \$3.25 |
| 3. 50 " " " " \$2.50 | 7. 50 " " " " \$6.25 |
| 4. 100 " " " " \$4.75 | 8. 100 " " " " \$11.90 |

1,000 Cleartone needles were up for 48¢. Disc and cylinder record cases went up to \$3.90 for a cylinder case holding 72. Parts such as springs went from 14 to 52¢ depending on model. A gadget called Haile's Modulator purified the tone for 38¢.

Spring 1912

Oxford Indestructible celluloid cylinders, in reality the product of the Albany, N.Y. Indestructible Phonographic Record Co., were now available as follows:-

- | | | |
|----------|----------|--------------|
| 2 minute | 23¢ each | \$2.75 dozen |
| 4 minute | 30¢ each | \$3.50 dozen |

A few of the British 7,000 numbers appeared here. Otherwise, merchandise was substantially the same as the previous fall.

Fall 1912

Five remaining external horn, taper arm Oxfords were offered at prices ranging from \$11.60 to \$34.60, depending mainly on size and winding capacity, the last two having the Music Master horn. Three 'Oxford Hornless Talking Machines' were offered from \$11.80 thru \$28.00. The price range was a matter of size and springing. The cheapo ran one 12" record, the middle grade at \$16.65 ran 3 10"ers, and the \$28.00 masterpiece of modern glue work drove 5.

Three cylinder machines appear with prices boosted as high as \$40.00. The prices may seem high for equipment that was on the way out, but these were all 2-4 combination machines with cabinet supported horn and were generally good reproducing instruments. I am not at all sure if the machines pictured are what is described, for what are pictured are a Jewel, and two models of the description of the older Universal size, BF-style machines. Each has the spring contact reproducer set at the angle similar to model C Edisons. Having never seen a combination Columbia other than several pictured in magazines, (all of which had the reproducer placed similarly to the Edison Model) I don't really know if the pictured machines are those that would have been delivered to every Middlesex, village, and farm that ordered one, or not. Apparently, these graphophones were meant to play both sexes with one sapphire stylus or so the copy reads, in which case a stylus of compromising dimensions must have been selected. Did it work? Ask the man who owns one.

Spring 1913

Material shown in this catalog is virtually identical to that reviewed under heading of Fall, 1912.

Fall 1913

Material shown here is substantially the same as that discussed under heading of Fall, 1912. One new hornless Graphophone was added to the disc line. This one had a top, and went for \$38.75. It is a substantial-looking machine modeled after the table model 'polite' machines of the day.

Spring 1914

Material shown in this catalog is virtually identical to that discussed under heading Fall, 1912, with the addition of the Graphophone mentioned under heading Fall, 1913.

Fall 1914

Only one cylinderophone was now offered, called the style A Oxford, the cheapest combination machine of those that had been listed for the past 2 years, weighing in at \$18.75. Two and Four minute Oxford Indestructible cylinders continued to be offered at the prices quoted in the Fall of 1911, which see, and the Oxford disc records kept plodding along at 30¢ each or \$3.50 per dozen. In short, the catalog which had once contained numerous models of both disc and cylinder machines as well as at least two brands of both cylinders and discs, (Columbia and Columbia off-brand trade names) was now limited to three disc and one cylinder machines, 3/4 page of cylinder records including only 28, 2-minutes, and one and half pages of single-sided, theoretically second-grade discs. The 'Song Hits of 1914' occupied 1/8th of one page.

* * * * *

The effect of the postal strike. . .

The post was restored to us on 8th. March, 1971, and since then I have received close on 100 letters as I type this note on 15th. March, most of which have been from overseas, and of them the bulk were posted between mid-December to 1st. February. It is obvious that some chaos is already with us, so I crave your indulgence because I am sure that mail is not arriving in the sequence in which was posted. Ernie Bayly

* * * * *

On E X O records. A thought by Edward Murray-Harvey . .

Readers will know that the Edison Bell Company pressed-off E X O records for Moorhouse's of Padiham, Lancashire from various Edison Bell masters.

I have E X O 89.

matrix

2055 (song) MARY

Alfred Heather

32 0

3013 (song) WHEN WE WENT TO SCHOOL TOGETHER Frank Miller

252 V

I just happen to have the WINNER version of MARY. The matrix number is the same 320, the catalogue number being 2016; but Mary is coupled with 'Take a pair of sparkling eyes.'

How, then, quickly to find the original version of the other side?

Mathematical solution coming up !!

Matrix number 252V. Divide by 2 = 126. Add 2000 = 2126.

Look in Mr. Adrian's excellent new catalogue, and against 2125 we find the song by Stanley Kirkby, possibly an alias of his being Frank Miller.

Who else has both the EXO & Winner of the same song? Does my "theory" work?

* * * * *

The Talking Machine Review, Editorial address: 19, Glendale Road, Bournemouth BH6 4JA, England.

INSTRUCTIONS

For the Use of Victor Fibre Needles



FIG. 1

Place the needle in the triangular needle hole, so that the long point is towards the front (as in Fig. 1) then tighten set screw. When in position for playing record needle will travel on the long point (as in Fig. 2).

Avoid injuring point of needle by carefully placing the needle point in the groove of the revolving record.

Before perfect results are obtained in playing some records, it may be necessary to play them several times and each time with a new No. 1 Fibre Needle, that is, if a needle fails to play any record to a successful termination, use a new needle and play over several times (each time with a new needle) that part of the record that fails to perfectly reproduce. A little patience exercised in such cases will be rewarded with a perfect reproduction that will last forever. A No. 2 (shorter and heavier needle) should never be used on such records until record has been trained to perfectly reproduce with the No. 1 Needle.

Needles may be repointed as many as eight or ten times with Victor Fibre Needle Cutter (Price, \$2.00) with increasing volume of sound as needle gets shorter, but shortened or repointed needles should not be used until record has been trained for fibre needles.

When needle has been repointed until it is only five-eighths of an inch in length, it should be thrown away. Fibre Needles shorter than five-eighths of an inch will not reproduce properly.

No. 1 Fibre Needles (samples herewith) are long and slender. Only full length new No. 1 Needles should be used to play and train new records. After record has been trained to fibre needles, the No. 1 needle may be repointed eight to ten times with Victor Fibre Needle Cutter, thus enabling you to use one needle as often as repointed. Do not use Fibre needles that have been shortened to less than five-eighths of an inch.

No. 2 Fibre Needles are shorter and heavier and produce a greater volume of sound, but No. 2 needles must not be used in playing new records. Records must be trained to play with No. 1 Needles before playing them with the No. 2 Needle.

IMPORTANT

Machine must be level.

Cabinet, or stand upon which it sets must not shake or vibrate.

Tapering arm of your Victor must work free, easy and balance so that there is no tendency for it to swing either in or out of its own accord.

Records will last forever, if played only with Fibre needles.

The very substance from which the fibre needle is manufactured precludes all possibility of injury to the record.

The oily matter in which it is prepared acts as a perpetual lubricant and the needle thus becomes a buffer, polishing and smoothing the grooves to a greater extent each time the record is played.

We ask, that in the first trial of the fibre needle, you be considerate and lenient, as a thorough knowledge of "how to use them" is necessary in order to obtain the best results.

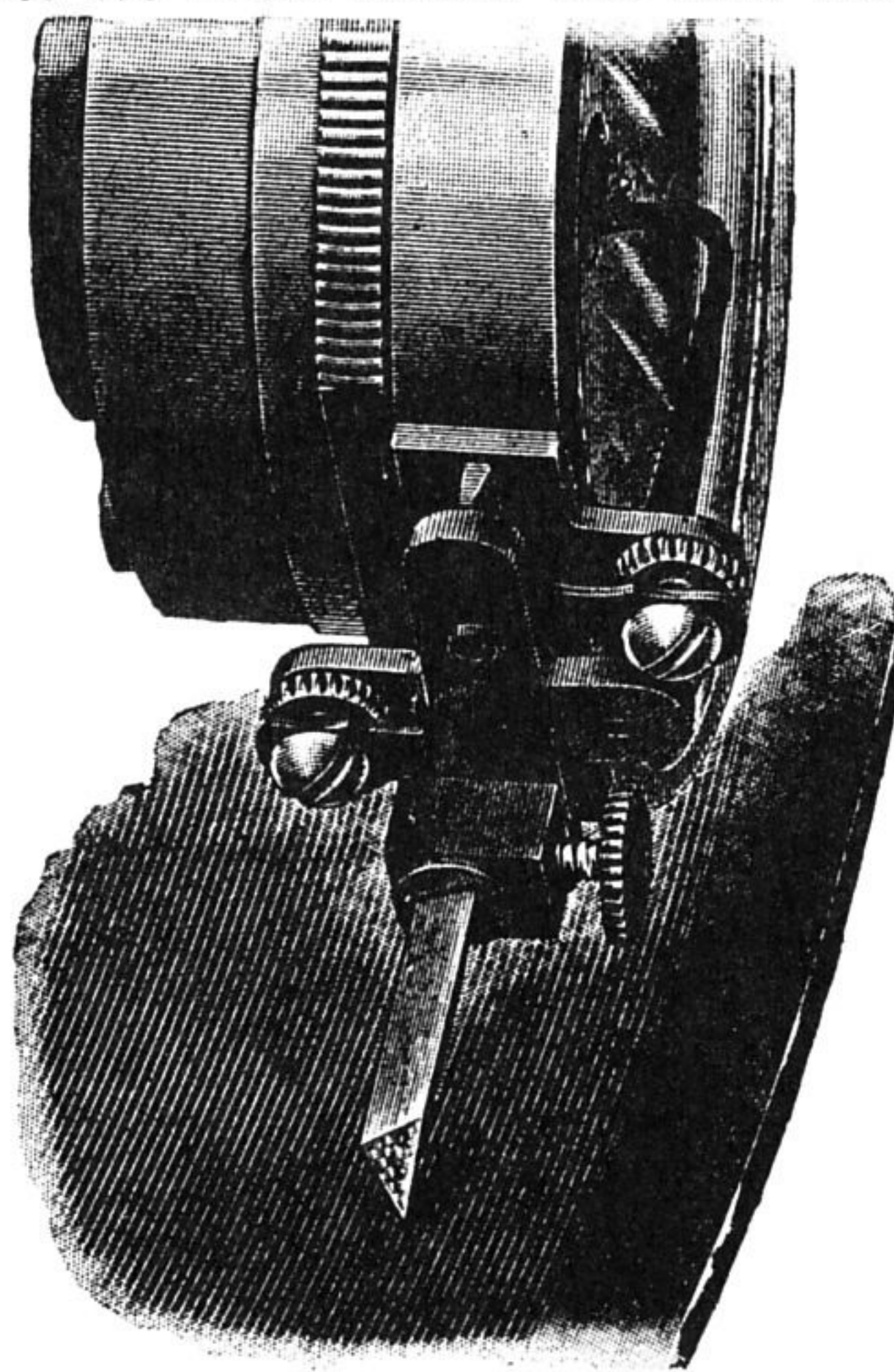


FIG. 2

VICTOR TALKING MACHINE COMPANY
CAMDEN, N. J.

[Patented November 12, 1907.]





PORTABLE MUSIC FOR THE SUMMER.



A NEW STYLE OF GRAMOPHONE WITHOUT A TRUMPET. THE "PIGMY" GRAND.

It will be seen from the above picture that the "PIGMY" GRAND is specially suitable for picnics and boating parties, and will appeal especially to those who wish to carry their Gramophones about. It is light, compact, and portable, and can be easily carried on a bicycle. Call on your Gramophone Dealer and see it.

(The Gramophone of to-day must not be compared with that of the past, or with other so-called talking machines.)

The Modern Gramophone can provide such an entertainment that there is nothing in the world of song and music to compare with it.

The Gramophone is the instrument chosen by the world's greatest artistes.

Buy a Gramophone as supplied to

H.M. THE QUEEN.

H.M. THE KING OF ITALY.

T.M. THE KING AND QUEEN OF SPAIN.

H.H. THE KHEWIVE OF EGYPT.



"His Master's Voice."
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GENUINE GRAMOPHONE NEEDLES are sold only in metal boxes bearing our Trade Mark Picture, "His Master's Voice." It is most important that Gramophone Records should only be played with genuine Gramophone Needles.

Send to-day for List of Accredited Gramophone Dealers. On receipt of Post Card we will send Catalogues and Lists, also our Brochures, "Opera at Home," and "The Living Voice," together with the Name and Address of the nearest Dealer in our Goods.

THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY, Ltd., 21, City Road, London, E.C.